

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L WARSAW 2216

EO 11652GDS
TAGS: PFOR, CGEN, PL, GW
SUBJ: FRG-POLISH DIFFERENCES OVER PLACE NAMES IN POLISH PASSPORTS

REF: BONN 3874

1. ON MARCH 15, AN EMBASSY OFFICER DISCUSSED THIS SUBJECT WITH THE FRG EMBASSY'S CONSULAR COUNSELOR, WOLFDIETRICH VOGEL, WHO CONFIRMED THAT THERE HAD BEEN PROBLEMS OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS. VOGEL SAID THIS ISSUE WAS NOT NEW BUT REPRESENTED ONE OF THE CONTINUING EFFORTS BY THE POLES TO REWRITE HISTORY THE WAY THEY WANT IT. (HE COMPARED IT WITH THE DISPUTE OVER TREATMENT OF POLISH-GERMAN RELATIONS IN FRG SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS.) THE ISSUE WOULD BE REVIVED BY THE GOP WHENEVER IT DECIDED TO SUBJECT FRG-POLISH BILATERAL RELATIONS TO A "WECHSELBAD".

2. VOGEL RECALLED THE 1970 "GENTLEMEN'S AGREEMENT" ON PLACE NAMES WHICH PROVIDED THAT THEY BE DENOMINATED IN GERMAN, EG, BRESLAU, IN PASSPORTS OF PERSONS BORN IN THESE TERRITORIES BEFORE THE END OF WORLD WAR II ENDED AND IN POLISH AND GERMAN, EG. WROCLAW (BRESLAU) FOR PERSONS BORN AFTER 1945. IN DECEMBER, 1977, POLISH OFFICIALS REFUSED VISAS TO SOME GERMANS WHOSE PASSPORTS CONTAINED PLACE NAMES DESCRIBED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ORAL AGREEMENT. THE POLES DENIED THAT THEY HAD EVER CONCLUDED
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SUCH AN AGREEMENT AND INSISTED THAT THE POLISH PLACE-NAMES BE USED EXCLUSIVELY.

3. VOGEL SAID THAT, QUITE ASIDE FROM THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL AND PARLIAMENTARY SITUATION IN THE FRG, THE ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS THE WEST GERMANS WOULD FACE IN COMPLYING WITH THE POLISH DEMAND

WOULD BE INSUPERABLE. THIS IS BECAUSE FRG PASSPORTS ARE ISSUED BY LOCAL POLICH AUTHORITIES, WHO HAVE ONLY OLD GERMAN RECORDS TO RELY ON IN MANY INSTANCES. THESE POLICE OFFICIALS FREQUENTLY DO NOT KNOW THE CURRENT POLISH DESIGNATION FOR A PLACE.

4. HE ADDED THAT THE POLES HAVE APPARENTLY ONCE AGAIN STARTED TO ISSUE VISAS IN FRG PASSPORTS WHERE THE PLACE NAMES ARE DISIGNATED AS CALLED FOR UNDER THE 1970 AGREEMENT. THE GOP, HOWEVER, HAS NOT OFFICIALLY ACCEPTED THE SOLUTION SET FORTH IN THAT ARRANGEMENT. THE FRG EMBASSY EXPECTS THIS QUESTION TO ARISE AGAIN THE FUTURE.
BROWN

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